Handing over UNI to private media group

934.SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what are the factors that led to the present financial condition of the UNI and handing it over to a private media group;

(b) whether Government are considering to assume this power and intervene and come out with an acceptable solution since there is no independent regulatory agency for overseeing this area; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (c) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting exercises no control over the Print Media. United News of India (UNI) is a media company registered under the Companies Act, 1956. Its affairs are governed by the shareholders through their representatives on the Board of Directors.

FM Radios in India

935. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of FM Radio's operating in India currently; and

(b) the total annual income calculated thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) At present 161 All India Radio FM transmitters at 152 places are operating in India and total annual income of Rs. 33.25 crores was received during 2005-06 from these FM transmitters.

Under the Scheme Private Radio FM (Phase II), letters of Intent were issued to different companies for operationalisation of 245 channels. 41 private FM channels are currently inoperation including the 21 channels operationalised in Phase I. While an amount of 10.67 crores was received for the year 2005-06 as annual license fee from 21 operationalised channels, the annual income expected from 41 currently ope.rationalis.ed

channels has been calculated as Rs. 15.24 crores. Besides, a total of Rs. 1145.48 crores was also received under the Phase II of private FM radio scheme on account of One Time Entry Fee and migration fee.

Telecasting quality and popular programmes

936. SHRI SANJAY RAUT Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the revenue collected by Doordarshan from various serials is extremely low as compared to serials telecast on private channefs; and

(b) if so, what are the observations of Government thereof and the steps taken or proposed to be taken for telecasting quality and popular programmes through Doordarshan?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Doordarshan is a public service broadcaster and is not motivated by purely commercial considerations. The details of revenue earned by private channels are not maintained by the Government. However, the overall revenue of Doordarshan including that from serials has increased during the last three years.

(b) Prasar Bharati has informed that in order to obtain quality software for its channels, the Self-Finance Commissioning scheme and Indian Classics programming have been introduced by Doordarshan. Further improvement is a constant and continuous exercise and Doordarshan continues to meet competition through appropriate initiatives.

Doordarshan Urdu Channel

937. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Doordarshan launched in exclusive Doordarshan Urdu Channel, recently;

(b) the duration of the channels would be on air;

(c) the details of content in the channel;